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Clue #8 - Idol Worship in a Secular World?

<https://endtimeupgrade.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Abom8.mp3>

(The Antichrist) opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. (2Thessalonians 2:4, ESV)

The Antichrist will declare war against all religion, especially if it has anything to do with faith in the true God. During the Modern Age we have seen, in preparation for this final conflict, the rise of certain philosophies that exalt man and his world as if that were the ultimate end of all things - what atheism, evolution and scientific materialism, humanism, and communism have been teaching for well over a century. These philosophies all deny the existence of a Higher Power.

In other words, they have already been doing what the above Scripture says about the Antichrist - oppose and exalt themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. A related Scripture in Daniel 11 says, “*And the king shall... magnify himself above every god... neither shall he regard the God of his fathers... nor regard any god.*” (11:36-37)

Throughout history the Devil has hidden himself behind the masks of certain philosophies and religious beliefs in his campaign to sidetrack human society away from worshiping the true God. If the Devil can't get people to worship himself - which most people in their right minds would

never do - then he has to disguise himself. But in this closing finale of the Age, the old masks will be discarded in favor of the final, ultimate “mask”, that of the Antichrist. By posing as the savior of the world, the Antichrist will deceive human society into a sort of secular worship of himself, and, most important to the Devil, this will tie in with some kind of denial of the true God.

An important first step in getting people not to worship God and to worship a man instead, is to persuade them that there is no God. Or if there is, then to persuade them that He is too distant from and unconcerned about humanity, or even that He is their enemy and human society must learn to get along without Him. Thus, it says of the Antichrist, *“He shall speak great words against the Most High... and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods... And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.”* (Daniel 7:25, 11:36; Revelation 13:6)

This war of words by the Antichrist will no doubt highlight the mistakes of mainstream religion. Because of the selfishness, belligerence, and hypocrisy that have infiltrated in recent years the ranks of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, this will deliver all the more ammunition to the cause of the Antichrist and his propaganda war *“against the most High”* and, of course, against those who are following Him, his *“war with the saints”*. (Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:7)

This stream of anti-Christ propaganda has been going on for centuries, of course, until nowadays the world is rife with agnostic and atheistic beliefs. Modern secular society barely tolerates what it has categorized as obsolete - faith in a loving Creator. It does not like to acknowledge the existence of any kind of higher power, or the supernatural, anything that might be construed as superstitious and unscientific.

As a result, there cannot be too much official recognition of this god. That in itself would have appeared *“strange”* to Daniel and the people of ancient times. They were accustomed to seeing a lot of outward manifestations in their religious worship.

And probably this is why the angel refers to it as a *“strange god”* -

because of its modern day guise - and as a *“god whom his fathers knew not”*. (Daniel 11:39) It doesn't resemble the ancient gods, at least not outwardly.

For example, the ancient god of war, Mars, would be represented by an idol, something easy to worship; and in those days idols were the most common type of “abomination” around. But in these days when that kind of idolatry has gone out of fashion, any god the Enemy wants to foist on the world has to appear as if it's not religious. He has to disguise it with the secular garments of science and technology - a rather *“strange god”*, in other words, a god who is not supposed to be recognizable as a god, as in the old days of idol worship.

And there is another *“strange”* feature about this *“god of forces”* - the destructive “abominations” that are attached to it. How peculiar to the minds of those in ancient times - these modern weapons of atomic bombs, war tanks, guns, war planes, UAVs, etc., inventions totally unimagined back then. Never did such a peculiar, faceless, no-name god like this exist in old time.

But with the onset of scientific materialism and inventions of modern weaponry, the ancient gods had to take on a new form. The ancient god of war Mars, for example, has morphed into this *“god of forces”* - *“a strange god”*, and *“a god whom his fathers knew not”* - unknown to former generations, but familiar to us in this last generation. At least we see this god manifested now in all its abominations - its horrendous inventions of destruction.

But beyond that, this *“god of forces”* cannot manifest itself openly. Any publicly recognized form (like a “religious” idol) would be unacceptable in our secular, scientifically-oriented society. Only in secret behind closed doors might such worship take place - perhaps by the Antichrist and his crew of warmongers.

So while the forces of Darkness are misleading the Antichrist to honor their war *“god of forces”*, they will at the same time be using him to abolish “religion” and to promote the worship of human society instead - with him, their man the Antichrist as the head of it. *“Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers... nor regard any god: for he shall magnify*

himself above all.” (Daniel 11:37) And in the end he will be “shewing himself that he is God.” (2Thessalonians 2:4)

This will be the Devil’s roundabout way of getting the world to worship himself by using the worship-of-man philosophy and the Antichrist as his mask. “*And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast.*” (Revelation 13:4) If he can at least get people not to worship God in any form - as communism used to do - and get them to give their allegiance to the “*beast*” (in the form of the False Prophet’s system and/or to the Antichrist himself, the one who has boldly proclaimed defiance against the Almighty), then they have strayed into the Devil’s camp. If not outright worship of the Devil, it will be the next best thing as far as he’s concerned. “*And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast.*” (Revelation 13:4)

So it seems the world is being brought ever closer to what the prince of Darkness is aiming for during the future Antichrist regime: zero tolerance of religion. No religious beliefs of any kind will be encouraged because that would allow a certain amount of freedom for the true worship of God.

At some point during his rise to power, the Antichrist will declare all-out war against religion - especially if it has anything to do with true faith in God. And what better way to launch such a war and challenge all peace-loving and religious people, than by sending in one of his abominable instruments of war into what is supposed to be an internationally recognized “*holy place*”?

In fact, that is the only way he can do it. If the covenant has already guaranteed Jewish people freedom to worship in their temple, then he can’t very well deny the same freedom to Christians and others to practice their faiths. So breaking the covenant will be the crucial starting point for all-out war against the religions.

Not unlikely, it will be the Israelis’ own misbehavior in Israel that will prove to be their undoing. If they cause enough provocation, that will be the excuse the Antichrist needs to abolish their religious services. And once that happens, it will trigger worldwide persecution against the people of faith.

So this seems to be what it means in Daniel 11:31 - *“they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength”*. The abomination is not the replacement object of worship, an idol or anything like that. It’s role is just to put a stop to “religion”. Here is the great sacrilege of modern times, the true defilement that will compel everyone in secular society to choose between any faith at all in a loving God, or faith in human society only - headed, of course, by the Antichrist.

But the Antichrist can’t just get rid of religion without bringing in something to replace it. And for that role, the new object of worship will be himself and his image. It will be a sort of secular usurping of God’s place in the hearts of humankind. (Daniel 11:36-37; 2Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:3,4,8,15)

But this *“image”* need not be located in the temple. Since the Antichrist will be sitting there, *“shewing himself that he is God”*, why have a manufactured image or idol of himself there at the same time? It would be too obvious that he’s trying to get the world to worship him in a religious way. And the modern world would back off from that sort of thing very quickly.

Unlike the olden days, crafted images and idols are not needed anymore to visualize the demagogue, for nowadays, the Antichrist’s *“image”* can be scattered all over the world via media broadcasting networks. And this will succeed, not only in filling the void of man’s need to worship something, but also, in spreading that worship (or adulation) far and wide.

It will be the ideal sort of image for the modern science-oriented world because there’s no superstition involved. And that makes more sense, to understand that the world will worship (or adulate) a real person via a broadcasted image, such as exists now with TV images, and possibly in the future, holographic images. (See post [“Unraveling the Mystery of the Image”](#).)

Nowadays, a non-living object cannot serve as a reputable incarnation of a deity (or of a demagogue). The only kind of “incarnation” that will work in today’s world are live images, such as the kind that are broadcast directly through TV transmission. These are the images that really do the

job of generating worship in the secular world of modern times. (We could compare this to how Hitler succeeded in getting the German people to worship him by conveying his live presence through the media of radio and movie clips.)

In [Post 6](#) we considered how, if the *“abomination”* were an idol in the temple, there would be some difficulty in erecting something like this in a short time or in secret. But even if it were a simple operation, it still could not serve as a true object of worship - because nobody would worship it.

It would seem too *“religious”* in the world’s eyes for one thing - just replacing one religion with another religion. And secondly, without the force of superstition, a crafted object could not inspire much devotion in the hearts of the scientifically-oriented populace of modern times. It is enough then for the Antichrist just to sit in the temple, *“shewing himself that he is God”*.

Back in the old days though, a ruler could brazenly declare himself to be a god, and by the power of superstition the public were persuaded to worship him and his lifeless images. But nowadays, a more subtle approach is required: the Antichrist can go as far as *“showing himself that he is God”*. But to do more than this might, in the secular world’s eyes, smack too much of *“religion”* or *“superstition”* - some kind of throwback to an ancient time.

That doesn’t mean there won’t be a *“religion”*; it will just be a religion that doesn’t look like a religion, since it will be disguised under a secular cloak. In the 1930’s and 40’s, the German people worshiped Hitler. He didn’t say that he was God, but the people worshiped him as if he was God. And in the future, instead of *“heil Hitler”*, the people of the world will show their allegiance to the Antichrist by taking the *“mark of the beast”*. That will be the new initiation rite, and the image they worship will be his broadcasted image.

This is comparable also to the *“religion”* of atheist communism that was rampant in the world during the 20th century. That was a religion of unbelief in God - the worship of man and his world - and it had its demagogues (Marx, Lenin, Mao) who were *“worshiped”* (in secular fashion) back in those days. So it’s quite possible that the *“worship of the*

beast” religion that the Revelation Book describes will be modeled along lines similar to what happened in Germany and communist nations in the 20th century.

Now, to give his new religion of demagoguery and materialism its kick-start - or by this time it may be more a matter of giving it a boost - the Antichrist will tear up the *“holy covenant”* agreement he has made. He sends a violently destroying *“abomination”* into the *“holy place”*. This will succeed in *“polluting the sanctuary of strength”*, and it would be a deed that carries a lot of religious (or anti-religious) significance in a secular society. It will be the modern equivalent of installing a pagan idol.

Such an event will be heralded as human society’s great victory over religious superstition. The humanist, secular world will applaud it as marking the beginning of humankind’s entrance into a *“brave new world”*. God has finally been thrown out, the world will say, and human society can now begin to build their own utopia, heaven on earth without God.

So, once the *“abomination”* has entered the *“holy place”*, it’s done its job. All former religions will be abolished; the Antichrist will become the world’s god (but worshiped in secular fashion). And the hoped-for *“brave new world”* without God will begin.

However, the utopian dream will soon turn into a complete nightmare, in fact, a complete catastrophe. *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”* (Matthew 24:21) This final subterfuge by the Devil, Antichrist, and False Prophet to cause humankind to try to rule the world without God’s help is doomed to end in utter failure.

But thankfully, that will also bring on the end of our present Age of history. Then it will be time for the Almighty to move and to usher in the Millennium - a new and glorious Age of Peace and Heaven on Earth. Truly something to look forward to!

Continue to [**Clue #9: Image and Abomination - Separate Inventions**](#)